

Chapter 7: Veterans Administration Educational Programs

The Montgomery GI Bill (Chapter 30)

Information in this chapter is extracted from the Veterans Administration web site at <http://www.gibill.va.gov/>. Users are encouraged to check the web site frequently for program changes.

What is the Montgomery GI Bill - Active Duty?

The Montgomery GI Bill - Active Duty, called "MGIB" for short, provides up to 36 months of education benefits to eligible veterans for:

- College, Business
 - Technical or Vocational Courses
 - Correspondence Courses
 - Apprenticeship/Job Training
 - Flight Training
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Who is Eligible?

You may be an eligible veteran if you got an Honorable Discharge, AND you have a High School Diploma or GED or, in some cases 12 hours of college credit, AND you meet the requirements of one of the categories below:

CATEGORY I

- Entered active duty for the first time after June 30, 1985
- Had military pay reduced by \$100 a month for first 12 months

Continuously served for 3 years, *OR* 2 years if that is members enlistment term, *OR* 2 years if entering the Selected Reserve within a year of leaving active duty and served 4 years ("2 by 4" Program)

CATEGORY II

- Entered active duty before January 1, 1977
 - Served at least 1 day between 10/19/84 and 6/30/85, and stayed on active duty through 6/30/88, (or 6/30/87 if you entered Selected Reserve within 1 year of leaving active duty and served 4 years)
 - On 12/31/89, member had entitlement left from Vietnam Era GI Bill
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Veterans Administration Educational Programs (continued)

**Who is
Eligible?
(continued)**

CATEGORY III

- Not eligible for *MGIB* under Category I or II
- On active duty on 9/30/90 AND separated involuntarily after 2/2/91,
- *OR* involuntarily separated on or after 11/30/93,
- *OR* voluntarily separated under either the Voluntary Separation Incentive (VSI) or Special Separation Benefit (SSB) program
- Before separation, member had military pay reduced by \$1200

CATEGORY IV

On active duty on 10/9/96 *AND* member had money remaining in a VEAP account on that date *AND* elected *MGIB* by 10/9/97

OR entered full-time National Guard duty under title 32, USC, between 7/1/85 and 11/28/89 *AND* elected *MGIB* during the period 10/9/96 through 7/8/97

Had military pay reduced by \$100 a month for 12 months or made a \$1200 lump-sum contribution

**How Much
Does VA Pay?**

The monthly benefit paid is based on the type of training, length of service, category, and if DOD put extra money in your *MGIB* Fund (called "kickers"). Members usually have 10 years to use their *MGIB* benefits, but the time limit can be less, in some cases, and longer under certain circumstances. Additional information on payment rates may be found on the VA web site at http://www.gibill.va.gov/GI_Bill_Info/rates.htm

TA TOP-UP

On October 30, 2000, the President signed into law an amendment to the Montgomery GI Bill - Active Duty education program that permits VA to pay a Tuition Assistance Top- up benefit. The amount of the benefit can be equal to the difference between the total cost of a college course and the amount of Tuition Assistance that is paid by the military for the course. Tuition Assistance Top-Up is not additional Tuition Assistance. It is a Chapter 30 *MGIB* benefit. The payment is made to the individual claimant, not to the Institution. It is made in one lump-sum payment.

Note: Member cannot receive *MGIB* for tuition and request Tuition Assistance from the Coast Guard for the same amount. This is called double dipping and is illegal. Member should always apply for TA first, and then if necessary, use *MGIB*.

Veterans Administration Educational Programs (continued)

Eligibility: To be eligible there are two requirements:

- Eligible to receive Chapter 30 Montgomery GI Bill (MGIB) benefits. This means a person must meet the Chapter 30 MGIB basic eligibility requirements, and be either a veteran or have served at least 24 months if still on active duty.
- Receive Tuition Assistance (TA) from the military (Coast Guard). The person must receive TA for the course(s) for which the member is claiming Top-Up. Any course approved for TA by the USCG Institute is approved for Top-Up payments. Member will receive TA Authorization form (CGI-1561) for any course(s) approved for TA.

Note: VA determines member's eligibility for MGIB. If member is eligible for MGIB, the TA Authorization form establishes member's eligibility for Top-up. No certifications from the school are needed.

The Top-Up program is not available to reservists who are covered by Chapter 1606.

How to Request TA-Top-Up

If member has not previously filed a claim for MGIB, the following action will need to be taken:

Step	ACTION
1	Request tuition assistance from CG Institute by completing TA application.
2	Have the ESO certify the application, sign it, and then fax to CG Institute
3	CG Institute will review, approve, and provide TA Authorization form (CGI FORM-1560) to the member
4	Member will complete an application for VA education benefits, VA Form 22-1990. The form can be retrieved at the following Internet site http://www.gibill.va.gov/GI_Bill_Info/How_to_Apply.htm or http://vabenefits.vba.va.gov/vonapp/main.asp .
5	Member will indicate "Top-Up" on the VA application in item 1A under the MGIB-Active Duty block
6	Member will send TA Authorization form, along with the application for VA education benefits, to the VA Regional Processing Office that handles the claim for that region http://www.gibill.va.gov/Contact/contact.htm .

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Veterans Administration Educational Programs (continued)

How to Request TA-Top-Up (continued)

If member previously filed a claim for MGIB and wasn't denied benefits, he/she can simply submit the signed TA Authorization form received by the CG Institute to the VA Regional Processing Office that handles the claim <http://www.gibill.va.gov/Contact/contact.htm>.

Very Important: These claims are handled differently from claims for MGIB without TA. For TA Top-Up claims, member will not need to check in with the school official who certifies VA benefits. The VA won't need an enrollment certification on VA Form 22-1999. The member will not need to check for approval of the program for VA benefits; approval isn't an issue. That's because TA Top-Up is payable for any course for which TA is payable under DOD criteria.

Students who have previously filed a claim for MGIB should simply submit their signed TA approval form to the regional VA processing center. Note "Top-up" in the upper right-hand corner

Montgomery GI Bill – Selected Reserve (Chapter 1606)

Eligibility

To qualify for this program, members will:

- Have a six-year obligation to serve in the Selected Reserve signed after June 30, 1985. Officers must have agreed to serve six years in addition to your original obligation. For some types of training, it is necessary to have a six-year commitment that begins after September 30, 1990;
 - Complete initial active duty for training (IADT);
 - Meet the requirement to receive a high school diploma or equivalency certificate before completing IADT. You may not use 12 hours toward a college degree to meet this requirement;
 - Remain in good standing while serving in an active Selected Reserve unit.
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Montgomery GI Bill – Selected Reserve (Chapter 1606) (continued)

Benefits

Members may be entitled to receive up to 36 months of education benefits. A maximum of 48 months of benefits may be received if members are eligible for more than one VA education program.

For the current rates for all types of training, check <http://www.gibill.va.gov/>. The basic monthly rates increase October 1 every year with the Consumer Price Index (CPI) increase.

For approved programs in college and vocational or technical schools, basic rates are monthly and based on your training time.

For on-the-job training and apprenticeship programs, rates are monthly and based on your length of time in the program. Your MGIB rates decrease as your wages increase according to an approved wage schedule.

For correspondence courses, you receive 55% of the approved charges for the course.

For flight training, you receive 60% of the approved charges for the course.

Tips for Activating GI Bill Benefits

Application

To access any VA educational benefit, members must submit VA Form 22-1990 to the regional VA office with jurisdiction over the state where the applicant is located. Most large academic institutions have an office that handles veteran's affairs. The form is available on line at: <http://www.va.gov/vaforms/>

Regional Offices

DVA processing of benefits is handled by four regional offices. Use the information in the following charts to locate the appropriate DVA office.

Eastern Region

VA Regional Office	Connecticut	Massachusetts	Rhode Island
PO Box 4616	Delaware	New Hampshire	Vermont
Buffalo, NY	District of Columbia	New Jersey	Virginia
14202-4616	Maine	New York	West Virginia
	Maryland	Ohio	Foreign Schools
		Pennsylvania	

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Tips for Activating GI Bill Benefits (continued)

Southern Region

VA Regional Office	Alabama	Mississippi	South Carolina
PO Box 100022	Florida	North Carolina	Tennessee
Decatur, GA	Georgia	Puerto Rico	
30031-7022			

Central Region

VA Regional Office	Colorado	Kentucky	Nebraska
PO Box 66830	Illinois	Michigan	North Dakota
St Louis, MO	Indiana	Minnesota	South Dakota
63166-6830	Iowa	Missouri	Wisconsin
	Kansas	Montana	Wyoming

Western Region

VA Regional Office	Alaska	Idaho	Oregon
PO Box 8888	Arizona	Louisiana	Philippines
Muskogee, OK	Arkansas	New Mexico	Texas
74402-8888	California	Nevada	Utah
	Hawaii	Oklahoma	Washington

Resources

DVA web site at: <http://www.gibill.va.gov/> Phone: 1-888-GI-Bill 1 (1-888-442-4551)

End of Chapter